



METHODIST MISSION AND ECUMENICAL NEWSLETTER - February 2021

COVID-19 AND SASAMUNGA HOSPITAL, SOLOMON ISLANDS

A brief update from Rev. Caleb Kotali, Hospital Secretary:

“Solomon Islands so far has recorded 18 positive cases imported from returning citizens from Philippines; United Kingdom, India and New Zealand. 14 cases already recovered, discharged from isolation wards and already returned homes. 4 positives cases are still in the isolation wards.

“Our Government is very strict on security and maintaining safety rules.

“Christians continues to pray for the virus not to spread out in Solomon Islands. Education awareness continues in various communities.”

HEALING THE WORLD: EIGHT BIBLE STUDIES FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The Covid-19 pandemic, which has brought death to hundreds of thousands, and serious illness to millions more, also poses profound spiritual questions and real challenges to churches everywhere. The pandemic itself has been a fundamental test of our faith in God and God’s providence and it requires of us urgent re-examination of our relationship to God, each other and the natural world.

In *Healing the World*, the World Council of Churches offers eight Bible Studies to facilitate our coming to terms – as individuals, groups and communities of faith – with the loss, fear and confusion engendered by the pandemic, and the bracing prospect of building a new world.

The studies may be downloaded from the World Council of Churches website: <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/covid-19-resources#bible-studies>.



Christ's love
moves the world
to reconciliation
and unity

World Council of Churches
11th Assembly
Karlsruhe, Germany
31 August – 8 September, 2022



NEW 2022 DATE FOR 11TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The executive committee of the World Council of Churches has approved a new date for the 11th General Assembly which will now be held in Karlsruhe, Germany from 31 August till 8th September 2022. The event was postponed for one year because of the gravity and uncertainties related to the Covid-19 pandemic. “Inspired by the theme ‘Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity,’ our fellowship will come together in prayer and celebration,” said Prof Fr Ioan Souca, interim general secretary. “The assembly will be a unique opportunity for the churches to deepen their commitment to visible unity and common witness...”

The symbol for the assembly is composed of a cross; a dove; a circle alluding to reconciliation; and crossed paths representing various journeys, movements for freedom and the vibrancy of the life of the member churches. A booklet providing a reflection on the Assembly's theme can be downloaded from:

<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/a-reflection-on-the-theme-of-the-11th-assembly-of-the-wcc-karlsruhe-2022>

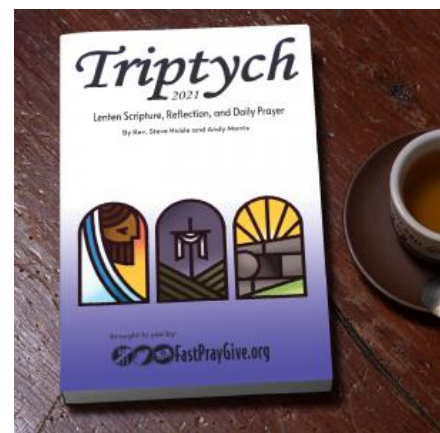
(And an update from the Christian Conference of Asia – the Assembly is now being postponed to 2022 also).

DEVOTIONAL RESOURCES FOR THE SEASON OF LENT:

From *WesleyMen*, an Affiliate Organization of the World Methodist Council:

Triptych for Lent 2021 - a new daily guide for Lent, has been prepared against the terrifying backdrop of this worldwide pandemic. May it take us deeper into our souls and closer to our Lord!

Our title references a triptych, an art form of three panels, often depicting a common theme. In this project, the “triptych” of Jesus’ temptations in the wilderness sets the season’s tone. An additional “triptych” of spiritual practices in the Sermon on the Mount (generosity, prayer, and fasting) directly inform the WesleyMen movement to Fast, Pray, and Give to end global hunger (www.fastpraygive.org).



After forty days of “fasting” in the wilderness, Jesus is said to be “famished.” Perhaps it is that experience that has him identifying with those who hunger and endure all kinds of suffering. This resource, a daily reading of scripture, reflection, and prayer, seeks to build a connection between the scriptures and the call upon our lives to assist and empower people in need. As we approach Easter, we invite you to join us by framing a personal response to human need.

This link will take you to the store, that is, the place where you may pre-purchase the resource. Given the foibles of international shipping, the very inexpensive download (USD 0.99) is an excellent option. <https://FastPrayGive.org/lent-2021>

From the World Council of Churches (WCC):

Seven Weeks for Water – WCC's Ecumenical Water Network invites you to use the season of Lent to reflect on God's gift of water. Since 2008, the WCC– through its “Seven Weeks for Water” campaign – has been providing weekly theological reflections and other resources on water for the seven weeks of Lent and for World Water Day on 22 March (which always falls during the Lenten period).

While water has a strong spiritual significance in the Christian tradition as a gift of God, around the entire globe, human misuse and pollution threaten this essential resource, and billions lack any access to clean water.

The WCC's Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace will have a regional focus on the North America region in 2021.

Accordingly, the 2021 Seven Weeks for Water takes us on a pilgrimage of water justice in North America. We will explore globally familiar places: Flint, Michigan, representative of the many American cities with drinking

water contaminated by lead; Standing Rock, where the Dakota Sioux have successfully fought the destruction of sacred waters by the Keystone Pipeline, and the Navajo Nation, where lack of water for handwashing has heightened the toll of the COVID pandemic in the Southwest. We will also explore other less storied places where we search for water justice from the verdant valleys of California to the salmon streams of the Pacific Northwest. Our guides are theologians and water justice activists from diverse faith traditions.



<https://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/ecumenical-water-network#seven-weeks-for-water>

AUCKLAND ECUMENISM SEMINAR – Hosted by the Catholic Diocese

The Catholic Diocese of Auckland is hosting an event as part of a series promoting Christian Unity: 23 February, 7:30pm at the Pompallier Centre in St Mary's Bay.

The Catholic Diocese of Auckland Commission for Ecumenism
2021 Talk Series Promoting Christian Unity
Celebrating *Ut Unum Sint* 25th Anniversary - That They All May Be One

Ecumenism

- one possible answer for a contemporary New Zealand

A Public Lecture
Tues 23rd Feb 2021 7:00PM
at Pompallier Centre,
30 New Street,
St Mary's Bay

Dr Rocio Figueroa
Theologian and lecturer
at Te Kupenga Catholic Theological College

BOSSEY ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE invites applications for online course

Bossey sets out to broaden its repertoire of courses in Ecumenical Studies to include a course now offered fully online. Applications are now open for the new online course, entitled "Together Towards Unity. Being Church in a Fragmented World."

Starting in April 2021, the course aims to expand opportunities for students to explore the biblical, theological, ethical, societal, interreligious and missiological dimensions of ecumenism as envisioned at Bossey.

"The Ecumenical Institute is unique in how it has taught and promoted ecumenical encounter for the past 75 years," reflects Ecumenical Institute dean Rev. Fr Dr Lawrence Iwuamadi. "This new online course builds on the long established Ecumenical Studies courses at Bossey in addressing the current changing dynamics and configurations of ecumenism through a new medium," Iwuamadi adds, noting an online course as one way to make Ecumenical Studies accessible during a time marked by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rev. Dr Simone Sinn, vice dean and professor at Bossey continues: "This course offers succinct introductions into the classic dimensions of ecumenical studies, guiding students to explore ecumenical relations in their local contexts, share about them in a global cohort of students and deepen their understanding through theological study. Strengthening the students' agency and their capacity for theological discernment is vital in this study program," Sinn says.

As a pilot project, the course is offered free of charge in the spring of 2021. Deadline for an application is 1 March – **for people in Methodist Church of New Zealand interested in this course, the first contact should be with the Mission and Ecumenical Director.**

The course runs 5 April – 12 June 2021. For more information, check: <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/bossey-ecumenical-institute-invites-applications-for-online-course-expands-repertoire>

NATIONAL DIALOGUE FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY – annual forum

The 2021 Annual Forum for the National Dialogue for Christian Unity will be held on Thursday 25 February 2021 at the Loaves and Fishes Hall, Wellington Cathedral of St Paul, Hill Street, Wellington from 10.30 a.m. till 3.30 p.m.

MISSION AND ECUMENICAL BOARD

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